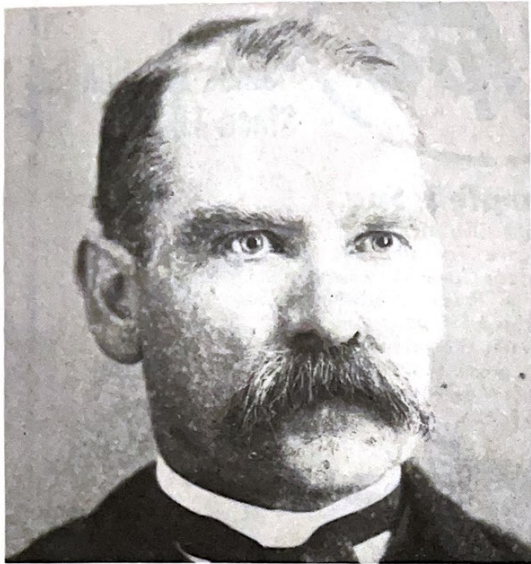


Washougal claims many 'firsts'



JOHN BATES PARKER, was the son of David Parker of Parker's Landing fame.

Though a number of trappers and explorers visited Washougal Camp over the years, it wasn't until 1838 that the first white man permanently settled at the "camp."

His name was Richard Howe, a British seaman who had served many years on Hudson's Bay Company vessels sailing between Columbia River ports and London.

Howe has descendants who live in Washougal today, but their last names are "Ough." The change in pronunciation and spelling of the last name came about soon after Richard Howe set foot on the shores of the Columbia River at Washougal Camp.

Being an Englishman, so the story goes, he dropped the "H" in Howe when he pronounced his last name. He could not spell his name, so recorders of the day wrote down his name the way it sounded: "Ough."

The records were never changed, and Howe's name is spelled "Ough" in documents he filed in 1849 when he purchased land in Washougal.

A Washougal amateur historian recently found one exception to this practice of misspelling Howe's name, however. He has discovered an 1855 military map which shows Howe's name on it, correctly spelled.

According to the historian, Cliff Crawford, "This is the only place we see Howe's name spelled correctly on a document of the times." Ough died in

1884 at the age of about 90 years. He never left his homestead in Washougal once he settled there. His Indian wife, Princess White Wing (affectionately known as Betsy), is said to have lived to the age of 112 years.

Washougal has a number of "firsts" to its credit, and one of these is that of being the site of the first settlement of American pioneers in the present State of Washington.

Though the David C. Parker family (of Parker's Landing fame) are commonly thought as being the first family to settle in Washougal, there actually was another group of settlers who came upon Washougal first.

A group of emigrants from the East reached the Dalles in Oregon in 1844, intending to settle on the South side of the Columbia River. George Bush, a mulatto, financed the bulk of the journey.

He found no escape from Eastern prejudices against his color, however, and decided to leave the Willamette Valley. Bush sent most of the members of his party to Washougal for the winter, including his wife, a white woman.

Bush and some of the men remained in The Dalles to drive cattle along the Columbia in the spring of 1845.

It was at this time that Washougal claimed another first. Mr. and Mrs. Michael T. Simmons, members of the Bush party who

wintered in Washougal, had a child in April 1845. The child, Christopher Columbus Simmons, is today regarded as the first white child of American settlers to be born in what is now the State of Washington.

Not all of the Bush party stayed in Washougal. Many of them, including Simmons and Bush, decided to travel to the Puget Sound country to find more suitable claims.

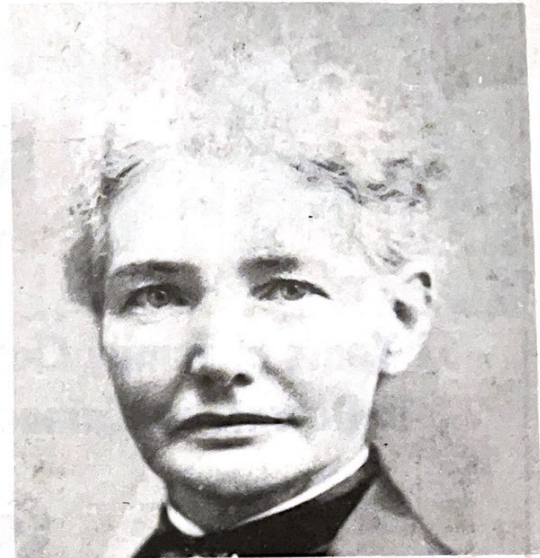
The now famous David C. Parker came to Washington Territory from Missouri in 1945 and took up the first formal homestead in the present State of Washington.

His homestead was in the area of the site now called Parker's Landing, present location of the Parker House Restaurant in Washougal.

Parker built a log cabin and lived there with his wife and four children, clearing one-fourth acre of land and planting potatoes from the Hudson's Bay Company store at Fort Vancouver.

Parker was born in Clay County, Kentucky, in 1804. In 1838 he met and married his wife, Ann, a girl from Missouri. Their four children were all under the age of six when they arrived in Washougal.

Parker was an industrious man, and he soon built a small dock on the Columbia River to receive supplies and to accommodate the river boats that came upstream. The site of the dock initially became known as Parker's Ferry, and this later evolved into Parker's Landing as the site is known today.



ELIZABETH LADY, John B. Parker's wife, was the daughter of Joseph Lady, for whom Lady's Island is named.

Other families soon followed the Parkers' lead. New additions included the Joseph Gibbons in December in 1847, the H.J.G. Maxons in October 1849 and the George Hunsackers in 1852. The Richard Oughs decided to formally file for a land claim in March 1849.

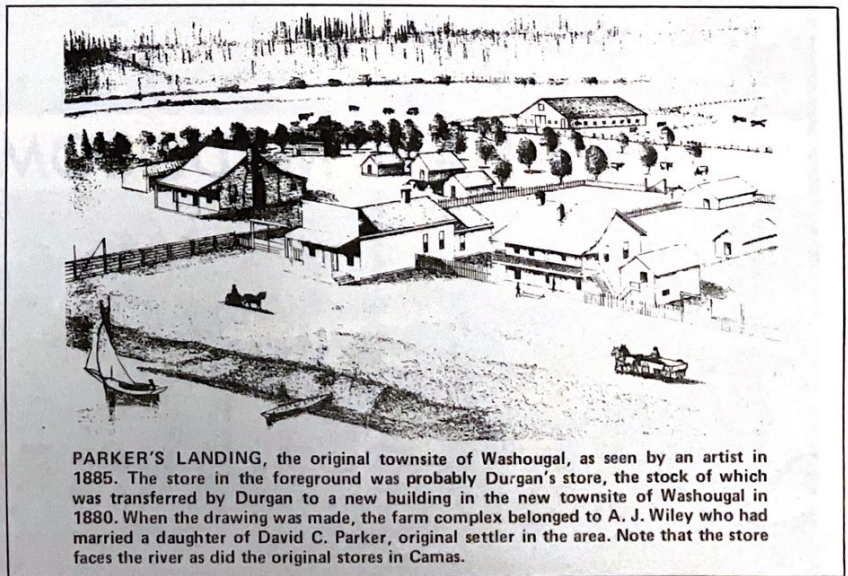
Justin Chonooth, under contract to James Tilton, surveyor general of the United States, surveyed the Washougal area in 1856. The Maxon and Hunsucker families had lumber mills operating by this time, and the town of Parkersville was born, starting with two townplats.

David Parker died in 1858. VanVleet accepted

part of the Parkersville property for his services as administrator of Parker's estate.

VanVleet had traveled from Michigan in 1853 to claim a homestead in Fern Prairie, just north of Camas. He was the first notary public and his daughter, born on the family homestead in 1862, became the first woman physician in the Camas-Washougal area.

Though the town of Parkersville was established, it was not destined to live long. In a sense, it would find itself competing with itself, in the form of the town of Washougal, just north of Parker's Landing. —G.A.



PARKER'S LANDING, the original townsite of Washougal, as seen by an artist in 1885. The store in the foreground was probably Durgan's store, the stock of which was transferred by Durgan to a new building in the new townsite of Washougal in 1880. When the drawing was made, the farm complex belonged to A. J. Wiley who had married a daughter of David C. Parker, original settler in the area. Note that the store faces the river as did the original stores in Camas.